



THE TIMES

Calling all law students: The Times 2TG Moot contest is back at last

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Maya Chilaeva was in the winning pair in the moot contest last year

The pandemic may have wounded *The Times* 2TG Moot competition but it has not killed off the event, which has been revived for its eighth year.

The contest has not been held since 2020, when it was won by Maya Chilaeva and Tey Guan Khoo. Chilaeva, 30, who is now a tenant at Quadrant Chambers, advises those participating to be prepared for the long haul.

Indeed, Covid made the process of the last moot even longer. Applications were received in May 2019 and the semi-finals were at the Royal Courts of Justice in January 2020. The final was scheduled for March, but the pandemic forced it to be postponed to September and to be held over Zoom.

Now back on track for traditional face-to-face mooting, the competition is open to all students in tertiary education in the UK and is part of 2 Temple Gardens's commitment to social mobility and the removal of barriers to accessing the Bar. Chilaeva arrived in the UK as a Chechen refugee and Khoo attended a state school in Singapore.

The last moot attracted a record 129 pairs of entrants. The competition differs from other national mooting events in that there is no limit to the number of applications generally or from any particular establishment.

The written moot problem for the first round will be available to download from February 28 from the chambers website and it will focus on coastal storms and the burden of proof. Competitors will have one month to present a two-page skeleton argument on the problem.

“The key piece of advice for those looking to participate is to identify early on a good team-mate,” Chilaeva says. “Someone you can rely on and will enjoy working with. This is crucial as the competition is a long haul.”

Four rounds will take place this year before the final in early 2023. Each stage will be an elimination contest with competitors judged on the standard of their oral advocacy.

The final will be held in London by a panel of judges including present and former members of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal.

Competitors will have an opportunity to moot before senior advocates and members of the judiciary at the highest level. All finalists will receive cash prizes and mini-pupillages at 2 Temple Gardens.

Chilaeva says: “Do not panic if you are asked a question by the judge. It helps you to understand what the judges are thinking, and it gives you an opportunity to address any concerns they may have.”

She adds that good notes are vital for having structured submissions and for honing advocacy, but warns competitors to be aware of their limits. Do not be so wedded to a script that it affects the quality of presentation or prevents engagement with the judges.

“You will be nervous before the moot and there is nothing wrong with that,” she says.

“A degree of adrenaline can keep you on your game. To keep your nerves under control, make sure you practise. Even now that I am a junior barrister, I can see that some of the very good advocates hone their oral submissions over and over again to get to the point where they can make their winning points and be in a position to answer the judge's questions.”

See <https://www.2tg.co.uk/the-times-2tg-moot/> for details.